

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Lives Select Commission – 30 July 2024

Report Title

CYPS Performance Report 2023/2024 Outturn

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Nicola Curley – Strategic Director, Children & Young Peoples Service

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The report includes the performance outturn for the reporting year April 2023 to March 2024 for Children and Young People's Services. It includes areas of performance that are working well alongside other areas where a continued focus is required.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that Members consider and accept the CYPS Annual Performance Report and accompanying scorecard for the outturn 2023/2024.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 CYPS Performance – Members Scorecard – Q4 (March 2024)

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

CYPS Performance Report 2023/2024 Outturn

1. Background

- 1.1 This report provides performance information which enables the scrutiny of service delivery and the associated impact on the outcomes for children and young people. The report evidences the council's commitment to continuous improvement. It should be read in conjunction with the appended performance data report, which provides trend data, graphical analysis, and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbours.
- 1.2 The report represents the monthly report for March 2024. It also provides a summary of performance under key themes across Children & Young Peoples Services (CYPS) including Early Help and Family Engagement, Social Care, Education and Inclusion at the end of the 2023/2024 reporting year (and Academic year 22/23).
- 1.3 Performance has been considered against local targets, including associated 'RAG' (Red, Amber, Green) rating tolerances. Targets are set in consideration of available national and statistical neighbour benchmarking data and recent performance levels and are reviewed annually. Reporting ensures focus on the effectiveness of services and achieving good outcomes for children and young people.
- 1.4 This annual report and ILSC scrutiny forms part of the strong operational performance management arrangements which are in place across the service. These include a programme of service and team-based performance meetings which are well embedded across the directorate. On a monthly basis governance is provided by the CYPS Performance Board, chaired by the Director of Children's Services, and attended by the Directorate Leadership Team, Heads of Service from across the directorate and the CYPS Performance Manager. An Assurance Board is held each quarter which provides a quality focus as well as performance management including work undertaken by the Young Inspectors, the Practice Learning Days (PLDs) and the monthly audit programme. Scrutiny is also provided by the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board (CPPB) and Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Partnership (RSCP).

2. Key Issues

2.1 Early Help and Family Engagement

- 2.1.1 **Summary of what has worked well against some key measures during 2023/2024**
- 2.1.2 In 2023/24 a similar number of families were offered an Early Help service as in 2022/23. 3043 contacts were made (only 90 fewer than last year), of which 93.2% were engaged within 3 days, exceeding the target of 75% and improving on last year's outturn by 4%. There has been an increase in the number of Early Help assessments completed by partners across the

borough, ensuring support is provided at the earliest opportunity and appropriate level prior to any escalation.

For the 886 families in scope for Early Help Assessment timeliness, 90.1% were completed with 45 days, again, exceeding the target of 85% and improving on last year by 2.5%. 401 assessments were complete by partners (such as school, midwives) across the borough making up 27.5% of our total assessments.

- 2.1.3 The Outreach and Engagement team had an ambitious target of registering 95% of children aged 0-5, living in the 30% most deprived Super Output Areas with Rotherham Children's Centres by 31st March 2024 (Super Output Areas are small geographical areas developed from Census 2001 information). This year we continued our positive trajectory, reaching 94.5% of children registered. This is a significant improvement on the previous 2 years of 87% (2022) and 92% (2023). This early engagement is important to ensure children and their families are connected with appropriate support and resources and/ or know where to find them should the need arise.
- 2.1.4 Following registration, 80.6% of children accessed Childrens Centre activities, exceeding the target of 65%. This was a significant improvement on the previous 2 years of 72% (2021/22) and 78% (2022/23). It is positive to see an upward trend year on year for these young children, and the service are already working with partners on ways to improve data production to help us identify families early and support them with both registration and engagement as soon as possible.
- 2.1.5 The Outreach and Engagement team also support older children preparing for adulthood. The team work directly with young people to break down barriers and find suitable Education, Employment, and Training (EET) provision. The annual outturn figures, which is based on a 3-month combined average for statutory reporting, met set targets for Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET), and Not Known young people. For these figures, lower is better. The NEET figure was 4.31%, within the target of 4.5% and an improvement on 4.95% last year. The Not Known figure was 0.64% well below our target of 1.5% and a significant improvement on 2.3% last year. The overall combined figure was 4.95% clearing our target of 6% and a very respectable improvement on 7.2% last year.
- 2.1.6 The Rotherham Youth Justice Service has a relentless focus on preventing young people entering the youth justice system, and ensuring that when they do, 'child first' principles are applied to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people and victims of crime. The rate of re-offending was 16.1 per 100k, an improvement on 19.8 in the previous reporting year. This is a national measure to help compare data. Performance is below Statistical Neighbours at 38.1 and the national average of 32.1. This is positive and demonstrates the impact of good multi agency support being provided to first time entrants. The recent increase in first time entrances may impact on this data in the future.

In terms of re-offences by re-offenders, this is 2.00 compared to 3.56 in the previous year (lower is better), and lower than statistical neighbour averages

of 4.43. This means that we are successful in preventing young people from offending further.

2.1.7 Summary of areas of continued focus against some key measures during 2023/2024

2.1.8 During January to December 2023, we had 49 First Time Entrants (FTE) into the Youth Justice system who received a caution or sentence. This is a benchmarked rate of 186 per 100k population. This is higher than the previous year of 44 FTE with a rate of 170, and slightly higher than statistical neighbours of 177.

2.1.9 Use of Custody was at 0.08 (binary rate, lower is better) compared to 0.0 in the previous year and 0.07 stat neighbours but below 0.11 nationally. This data relates to 2 children. Prior to this, there has been no custodial sentences since May 2020.

2.2 Children's Social Care

2.2.1 Summary of what has worked well against some key measures during 2023/2024

2.2.2 In 2023/24 there continued to be a safe and steady decline in numbers of children open to Children's Social Care, with an increase in prevention and working in partnership with families.

2.2.3 To monitor and compare performance both nationally and to other local authorities like Rotherham (statistical neighbours), rates of children against our 10,000 (k) population figure are monitored. The rates of children open to social care are reducing across the board and are all within set targets this year.

2.2.4 The rate of Children in Need (CiN) at the end of 2023/24 was 316.8, a reduction from 378.6 last year. This is below statistical neighbour average of 404.9 and the national average of 342.7. There has been a reduction of CiN subject to a plan for over 12 months, 46 children at the end of this year compared to 78 at the end of last year. Accessing Early Help services means families can access the support earlier without the need to step up to Children's Social Care (CSC). Family Network Meetings (FNM) and the use of Family Group Conferences (FGC) support families to develop plans to support themselves without the need for CSC intervention.

2.2.5 The rate of children with a Child Protection Plan (CPP) at the end of 2023/24 was 45.6, a reduction from 70.4 last year. This is close to the national average of 43.2 and below statistical neighbours of 60.0. The decrease can be partly attributable to the focus on strategy meetings and outcomes, greater scrutiny of conference requests, use of Family Group Conferencing and Family Network Meetings.

2.2.6 The rate of Children in Care (CiC) at the end of 2023/24 was 88.4 compared to 96.7 last year and is below the statistical neighbour average of 96.7, but

above the national average of 71. Children in care numbers continue to reduce through focussed work on rehabilitation and support to transition to Special Guardianship Order (SGO). Rotherham continues to support the National Transfer Scheme for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), set up by the government to ensure a more equitable distribution across local authorities, meeting the overall best interests of these vulnerable children. CiC data includes UASC (39/502), consequently the cohort is larger than it would be if it just included local children.

- 2.2.7 Our Leaving Care cohort stands at 348 at the end of 2023/24, an increase from 319 last year, with 45 who were formally unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- 2.2.8 Sometimes children will be re-referred into the service after a previous intervention. In May 2023, there was a peak in the percentage of re-referrals, which raised some challenge at Performance Board. This initiated some direct work to review all re-referrals in that period to identify any issues at previous closures. The learning and improvements that followed had a positive impact reflected by the rates steadily reducing over the year finishing with 17.3% of re-referrals, within the target of less than 22%. Learning included strengthening the use of Family Network Meetings and reinforcing the plan prior to closure with everyone in the network. Simple processes to ensure consistent management oversight at closure were also implemented.
- 2.2.9 A section 47 (S47) enquiry is initiated to determine what type of action is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child where they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. The rate of S47's has reduced this year, at 194.8 per 10k population, just above national average of 191.6. This is a continuing reduction from 278.2 last year. There has been some specific work completed with all managers relating to this area of practice, paving the way for a continued improvement on this measure.
- 2.2.10 When a child is placed on a Child Protection Plan (CPP), they have the plan updated on a regular basis. 95% of our children had an up-to-date plan at the end of the year, an improvement on 88.7% last year and meeting the target of 95%.
- 2.2.11 For Children in Care (CiC) in 2023/24, we saw an improving picture in placement stability with only 7.4% of children experiencing 3 or more placements within 12 months, compared to 9.7% last year (lower is better). This is below the statistical neighbour average of 9.5% and within the target of 8%.
- 2.2.12 For children with a permanence plan of adoption, there are 2 timeliness measures. The average number of days between a child coming in to care and being placed with their prospective adopters is 387.2 days, an improvement on 492.5 last year and surpassing the target of less than 487. The average number of days between a placement order being granted and the child being matched to an adoptive family is 182.6 days, improving on 197.4 days last year, but higher than the national target of 121 days. The national average is 175 days and even the top quartile performance average

is not achieving the target at 135.5 days. Our cohort of children on an adoption plan is quite small, which means individual circumstance for an individual child can inflate the overall averages. For instance, a child with complex needs where a longer duration of search for the right family is approved as the right thing to do.

2.2.13 For the Children in Care (CiC) cohort, we have seen a positive increase in children receiving visits within timescale at 97.6% compared to 95.6% last year.

2.2.14 For the older children in care, and those previously in care, we have the Leaving Care service. Whilst there a higher number of young people open to leaving care this year, and performance is slightly below last years performance, it is still within target and above national and statistical neighbour averages. At the end of 2023/24, 96.3% of care leavers were in suitable accommodation compared to 87.7% statistical neighbour average and 88% nationally. 66.4% of care leavers were in education, employment, or training, compared to 52.9% statistical neighbour average and 56% nationally.

2.2.15 **Summary of areas of continued focus against some key measures during 2023/2024**

2.2.16 From the beginning of a child's journey with us, the timeliness of the contact response is tracked and measured. In 2023/24, the percentage of contacts with a decision within 1 working day for Social Care had reduced to 69.3% from 72.1% in the previous year. Some recent work has highlighted that a large proportion of contacts not meeting the target are those progressing to MASH information sharing. Waiting for information back from partners means that is not possible to be complete within 1 working day. Other Local Authorities do not count this within their contact timeliness. In Rotherham we are developing new monitoring processes to monitor MASH information sharing contacts separately to give us deeper understanding of where delays are in returning the information. The timeliness of contacts will align with other local authorities and be based on decision being within 24 hours prior to MASH and for MASH Information Sharing responses to be measured within a 2 working day target. This will help to focus in on the cases that have a real delay, in turn improving timeliness through service improvement and working with partners.

2.2.17 Once a child has a referral to Social Care and an assessment is deemed necessary, the timeline set in the Working Together Guidance is 45 working days for completion. An ambitious target aims for 92% of assessments to be completed within that timeframe. Towards the end of the year that target has been met, however overall outturn was 88.2%, which is similar to last year's 88.6%. In comparison to other Local Authorities, this is good performance with statistical neighbours performing at 82.1% and national average at 82.5%. Rotherham is very close to the top quartile nationally of 89.7%. Assessment timeliness has been a topic of conversation at

- performance board throughout the year. A QA process is in place for managers at the point of sign off of assessments, where they may ask for additional information to improve quality, this may mean assessments exceed the timescale. Senior leaders are assured that first assessments for children entering the service are usually within 30 days (well within timescale).
- 2.2.18 When a child becomes a Child in Need (CiN) a plan is created and updated on a regular basis. 88.6% of Children in Need had an up-to-date plan at the end of 2023/24, an improvement of 80.9% last year but still below the target of 92%. This can be due to several factors such as a case being near to closure or step down to Early help, but the ambition remains to achieve this.
- 2.2.19 Further down the pathway of intervention, if a child is subject to Section 47 (S47) investigation and they progress to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC), there is a target to hold the ICPC within 15 days of the S47. In 2023/24, 84.8% of ICPCs were complete in time; below the target of 90%, but in line with statistical neighbours at 84% and national average of 78.4%. Late ICPCs are often the result of late requests for a conference. A new process has been implemented which involves raising with the manager on each occasion and there have been improvements from this. ICPC timeliness will remain a focus in the coming year.
- 2.2.20 At the end of 2023/24 4.6% of open child protection plans (CPP) lasting more than 2 years. This is above the target of 2.5% (lower is better). These children make up a small number of families, all of which have been recently reviewed to ensure positive trajectory for the children's safety and care planning. Two years is acknowledged to be too long, and learning has been taken on board by conference chairs and managers. This triggered further work in February and March 2024 to do some focused auditing for all children on a plan for 18 months or more. Measures are in place to track these plans including the continued use of midway reviews, check and challenge, and managerial scrutiny and oversight. This has been presented back to Performance Board to provide assurance.
- 2.2.21 2023/24 also saw an increasing trajectory of children on a CPP for a second or subsequent time within 2 years of their last plan. At year end performance was 12.5%, above our 8% target (lower is better). This increase has triggered some planned audit activity to review children in this cohort and to support any learning for practice in the workforce, to be delivered through 7 minute briefing format. Repeat plans are afforded closer scrutiny at the point of the second ICPC request. Step down is subject to scrutiny in audits, via the chair, at closure, and at rereferral. This will ensure that plans are correct for children at the point of need.
- 2.2.22 In 2023/24, 95.7% of children on a Child Protection Plan (CPP) had their plan reviewed with timescale. This is below the ambitious target of 98% this year, but above the statistical neighbour average of 79.1% and national average of 88.1% evidencing that performance is strong when comparing with other local authorities.

- 2.2.23 On 31st March 2024, 91.8% of children on a Child Protection Plan (CPP) had received a visit within the last 2 weeks, a reduction in performance compared to last years 95.1%, and below the target of 95%. Performance in this area fluctuated across the year, often linked to holiday periods. Visiting our children is a priority and key to ensuring children are safe. Visit timeliness has been discussed at Performance Board and some deep dive work to identify any common themes or barriers agreed. This performance will remain an area of focus over the next year.
- 2.2.24 In June 2023, the way we the number of children in care (CiC) who had an up-to-date plan is reported changed. Performance data had been tracking whether a plan was updated within 10 working days of a review taking place. While this is best practice it is not comparable with other local authorities. The true measure should be whether a plan is updated within one, three or six months (depending on the length of time a child has been in care). Due to this reporting change, performance decreased during the year to 84.4% when compared with 94.7% the previous year. The aim will continue to be to update plans within the 10-working day timeframe, however the correct reporting methods will now be used. This decision was made following in-depth discussion at Performance Board and has also been supported by the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board (previously Corporate Parenting Panel).
- 2.2.25 Health and Dental check timeliness remains an area of focus for both Social Workers and Independent Reviewing Officers, in collaboration with colleagues in Health. At the end of March 2024, 83.7% of children in care had an up-to-date health assessment recorded on the case management system (an improvement of 78.7% last year) and 61.8% of children had an up-to-date dental assessment (a decline in performance from 69.4% last year). Both have a target of 95%. Some children (often teenagers) decline health and dental checks, which remains a challenge and an area of focus.
- 2.2.26 The number of children in care is steadily reducing. However there has been an increase of children entering care who are over 16 years of age (children who are unaccompanied minors who have travelled from abroad) requiring supported accommodation. This has reduced the percentage of children in a family-based setting at 75.3% compared to 77% last year.
- 2.2.27 For longer-term children in care, remaining in placement for at least 2 years, performance was almost identical to last year at 65.1%, but remains below our target of 70% (higher is better). Wherever possible, any moves are positive and as a result of permanence planning for the child. There are several panels that monitor and support placement stability, with oversight from the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO).

2.3 **Education and Inclusion**

- 2.3.1 The year-to-date figures referenced in the March 2024 Members Scorecard include Term 1 and Term 2, as Term 3 has not yet ended. The full academic

- year end data and attainment results in the Members Scorecard, is reported during the Autumn Term.
- 2.3.2 Whilst education data is reported termly, continued check and challenge of education performance takes place at the monthly CYPS performance board, working collaboratively with colleagues across the service to take a whole service approach on impact and outcomes.
- 2.3.3 Due to technical issues with the education systems provider Capita, there are difficulties reporting on attendance reliably. Capita have changed the way data is transferred from schools into the system and problems with the implementation of this has caused gaps. Work is taking place by Capita to address and resolve the issue.
- 2.3.4 **Summary of what was working well against some key measures during 2023/2024**
- 2.3.5 International research shows that children who spend longer in early years provision have better educational outcomes later on. It also shows that high-quality early years provision particularly benefits children from low-income backgrounds. At the end of Term 2, 90.9% of eligible 2-year-olds were taking up an early education place in Rotherham, surpassing the 85% target. This is slightly higher than Term 2 last year where we achieved 90% and is the highest level of take-up we have achieved in a Spring term. This is positive as take up tends to fall slightly in this term as more children become eligible for a place and therefore the new cohort may have less choice of available times and days or specific childcare providers.
- 2.3.6 A preferred education setting is important for both children and their families in their everyday lives. This year, 97.4% of secondary children were allocated a place at one of their 3 preferences on National Offer Day, an improvement on 96% last year and above the national average of 96%. For Primary, 99.2% were allocated one of their 3 preferences compared to 99% the previous year.
- 2.3.7 The latest attainment data is our 2022/23 outturn. There was an increase in the percentage of early years foundation stage pupils achieving a good level of development at 67.3% compared to 64.5% the previous year. There was an increase of pupils passing the phonics screening check in year 1, with 79% compared to 75% the previous year. 55% of key stage 2 pupils were meeting the expected standard and 5 % in higher standard for reading, writing, and maths, a 1% improvement on each this year compared to the previous year 2021/22.
- 2.3.8 From January to December 2023 (period in line with DfE reporting), a total of 59.9% of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) were issued within 20 weeks. This is above the target of 58% and an improvement on 51.6% in the previous year. This continues to be an improving picture throughout 2024 (Jan-June – 75.6%), despite the challenges of increasing numbers of requests from schools and waiting times on advice reports, for example from health.

- 2.3.9 Children with an EHCP have a transition review for both Primary and Secondary transitions. Each of these have a statutory deadline date. For Primary, this was 15th February, where we achieved 95.8% exceeding our target of 70%. For Secondary, the statutory deadline was the 31st of March, where we achieved 79.1% again exceeding the target of 70%.
- 2.3.10 The number of children missing from education (CME) at the end of term 2 was 110 compared to 116 at the end of term 2 last year. A child who is CME is someone who is of a compulsory school age but is either not registered at a school or else not receiving suitable education in place of a school setting. There is an improved process between our CME team and schools to ensure continued timely support for children who become CME in Rotherham.
- 2.3.11 At the end of term 2 the latest data at the time of reporting indicated that 93.5% of children in care had received an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP) in the term. However, updated performance information tells us that this figure is actually 99.7%, which is comfortably above our target of 95%.
- 2.3.12 **Summary of areas of continued focus against some key measures during 2023/2024**
- 2.3.13 Some areas of attainment at the end of school year 2022/23 saw a reduction in performance. 38.7% of key stage 4 pupils achieved grade 5 or above in English and Maths compared to 44.7% the previous year. The average attainment 8 score at year 11 was 43.1, down from 46.7 the previous year. Finally, the English Baccalaureate average point score was 3.58 down from 3.83 the previous year. Work continues across place-based approaches such as Rotherham Loves Reading and Disadvantaged Pupils project, to help support and drive attainment.
- 2.3.14 Numbers of Elective Home Educated (EHE) children continue to rise with 523 at the end of term 2 compared to 435 at the end of term 2 last year. A specific action plan is in place in response to this to ensure the right support can be offered to parents and carers who choose to home educate in Rotherham. Resources have been updated and shared with schools and partners, including in Voluntary Sector, with continued assurance in place through the governance group.
- 2.3.15 At the end of term 2 we had recorded 11 permanent exclusions for primary and 73 for secondary for the year so far. This is an increase on 6 and 60 respectively at the same point last year. The response to increasing exclusions has continued this year following engagement with school leaders through a series of consultation events. The response includes updated guidance, the introduction of webinars, supporting alternatives to exclusion and the realignment of Secondary Inclusion Panel into localities.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Members to consider and accept the CYPS Performance Scorecard for March 2024 (Out-turn 2023/2024) as attached – Appendix 1
- 4. Consultation on proposal**
- 4.1 N/A
- 5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**
- 5.1 N/A
- 6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**
- 6.1 There are no financial implications with this report.
- 7. Legal Advice and Implications**
- 7.1 There are no legal implications with this report.
- 8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**
- 8.1 There are no human resource implications with this report.
- 9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**
- 9.1 Performance and Quality assurance is a key element of the work of Children and Young Peoples services to ensure that outcomes are improved for Rotherham children and their families and that they are resilient, successful, and safe.
- 10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**
- 10.1 There are no Equalities and Human Rights implications with this report
- 11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change**
- 11.1 There are no CO₂, Emissions or Climate Change implications with this report.
- 12. Implications for Partners**
- 12.1 Partners and other directorates are engaged in improving the performance and quality of services for children, young people, and their families, including via the Rotherham Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (RSCP), the CYPS Performance Board, the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board, the Early Help Steering Group and the SEND Strategic Partnership Board. All boards receive performance reports on a regular basis.
- 13. Risks and Mitigation**
- 13.1 Inability and lack of engagement in performance management arrangements by managers and staff could lead to poor and deteriorating services for

children and young people. Strong management oversight by the Directorship Leadership Team and the continued development of the Performance Management Framework mitigates this risk by holding managers and workers to account for any decline in performance both at a team and at an individual child level.

Accountable Officer(s)

Kelly White, Interim Assistant Director Early Help and Family Engagement

Monica Green, Assistant Director, Children's Social Care

Niall Devlin, Assistant Director, Education & Inclusion

Helen Sweaton, Joint Assistant Director, Commissioning, Performance and Quality

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
The Strategic Director with responsibility for this report	Nicola Curley – Strategic Director, Children & Young Peoples Service	05/07/24
Consultation undertaken with the relevant Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People - Councillor Cusworth	16/07/24

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